

The Musical World.

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VOL. 34.—No. 36.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 1856.

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BRADFORD MUSICAL FESTIVAL.

(From our own Reporter.)

BRADFORD, SATURDAY, Aug. 30.

THE Bradford Festival was brought to a termination last night with great *éclat*, and notwithstanding the discouraging prospects which presented themselves at the commencement, from a complication of circumstances no one could have foreseen and nothing prevented, the second grand triennial music meeting of the North may be pronounced, from an artistic point of view, eminently successful. Although at present no official accounts have been published, I am credibly informed that the receipts will be, after all, much larger than was anticipated two days since. It must be remembered that the outlay on the present festival far surpasses that of 1853. This was partly owing to the expense incurred in the production of the two new cantatas, *May Day* and *Robin Hood*, the copying of the parts for band, chorus, and principals—no inconsiderable sum for nearly four hundred performers—having been paid by the directors. The anxiety to do something for native talent (!) must be received as some extenuation for extraordinary expenditure; but surely, considering what the chorus had to undergo in rehearsals of old pieces, and the amount of time and pains required to learn much that was unknown to them, one original work would have sufficed.* Of course, the chorus having too much to do, all the performances did not go as they should have gone, had there been time for preparation, and the natural consequence was that some suffered. This was more especially exemplified in the selection from *Immanuel*, yesterday morning, and in *May Day*, the evening previous, neither of which displayed the precision and finish so remarkable in the Yorkshire choral singers when they are familiar with the music they have to sing. It was the more to be regretted, since both these works have great merit, and are by English composers. Mr. Costa did his utmost, both for one and the other; but the time was too short to allow of more than one or two rehearsals, and the difficulty of making chorus singers coming from so many different places amalgamate in a new work was insurmountable. These remarks must not be received as derogatory to the singers, who, in what they knew, thoroughly sustained their reputation. They were taxed beyond their powers.

It must be admitted, that, in a monetary point of view, the success of the Festival did not realise the general expectations. So confidently was a surplus relied on, that there originated a controversy as to what should be done with it, many suggesting that it should be applied to charitable purposes, as at Birmingham and the Cathedral meetings. A local journal, however—the *Bradford Observer*—gives the following reasons why the surplus, if there is a surplus, cannot yet be applied to charities:

"Objection has been raised to the Festival on the grounds that the profits are not devoted to charitable purposes. It is a pity that such is not the case; but our readers will remember that St. George's Hall was not built out of the rates, as the Leeds and Birmingham Town-halls, but by a private association—certainly not for their private advantage, but for the public convenience and benefit. In carrying out their undertaking, they have involved themselves in heavy responsibilities, and it is only fair that they should apply the profits of the Festival to meet the expenses of painting and beautifying the hall and erecting the organ, and, if there should be any surplus, in liquidation of the heavy debt remaining. Let it be remembered that if our charities do not benefit, our pockets do not suffer by the building in which the Festival is held. Last year the corporation of Birmingham voted £2,000 for the painting, &c. of the hall; but nothing of the kind can be done here. We have often regretted that any debt should press upon our noble hall; it would certainly be more creditable to the town, and to the wealth and public spirit of the neighbourhood, if the debt were extinguished. Then we might have grand triennial musical festivals, and place all the profits to the credit of our Infirmary. This would indeed be a glorious thing, and £2,000, or £3,000—or perhaps more—paid over to the treasurer of the Infirmary every three years, would be something worth toiling for, and very materially enlarge the

sphere of its usefulness. Let us hope to see it done before another Festival comes round."

No doubt the *Bradford Observer* is right. The gentlemen who built the hall from their own private purses are justified in reimbursing themselves before thinking of charities. Had the hall been raised by the corporation, it would have been another matter, and the festival might then at once have resolved itself into a charitable institution. The contribution question is settled this year, however, by there being nothing to contribute. The causes of failure I have before alluded to; and the directors are now satisfied that they have lost hundreds of pounds through their erroneous estimate of prices. But for Madlle. Piccolomini—whose appearance was looked forward to with the greatest curiosity, and who attracted crowds to both the concerts at which she sang—the guarantee fund would have been taxed to a somewhat greater extent than was anticipated when the members signed their names to become responsible. Mademoiselle Piccolomini has not quite turned the heads of the people of Bradford, and there are great differences of opinion as to her vocal powers; but she filled the hall.

There is one thing in particular, which I am convinced militates against the success of the evening concerts. I mean the privilege accorded to singers of choosing their own pieces. The result is that they consult music-publishers, and introduce a quantity of commonplaces unworthy of the occasion. This, though it may please the groundlings, makes the judicious grieve. The programmes should be left entirely to the conductor; or, at any rate, singers should send in the names of pieces, subject to the conductor's approval or rejection. We should not then have to complain of the infliction of such compositions as "Over the sea," "Bonnie Jean," *et hoc genus omne*, at important musical meetings, while the vocalists would escape the censure they now bring upon themselves. The ballads I have just named may be very well in their places; but they are decidedly out of place at great festivals.

A brilliant and fashionable audience assembled at St. George's Hall on Thursday evening. Every part of the Hall was well filled, except the fifteen shilling seats in the area, which were only about three parts occupied. Nevertheless, this was a great improvement on former performances, morning and evening, and converted the fears of the directors into sanguine hopes as to the result. The programme was first-rate. It included Beethoven's symphony in C major, No. 1; Mr. Macfarren's new cantata, entitled *May-Day*; overtures to the *Siege of Corinth* and *Oberon*; two part-songs by the chorus—Müller's "Spring's Delights," and Bennet's "My mistress is as fair as fine;" and a very effective vocal selection sung by Mesdames Albani, Viardot Garcia, and Weiss, Madlle. Piccolomini, Miss Sherrington, Herr Reichardt, Signora Belletti and Benevignano.

Mr. Macfarren's cantata was composed expressly for the present Festival. It is divided into four parts. The first illustrates the choosing of the May Queen, in a chorus, "Who shall be Queen of the May;" the second, the *Hunt's Up*, is a part-song—"The Hunt's up, the hunt's up, awake, my lady, free;" the third, called *The Queen's Greeting*, includes a recitative, "Loyal hearts, your rural Queen," and song, "Beautiful May, with thy lap full of flowers," for solo and chorus with a burden; and the fourth, entitled *The Revels*, comprises a chorus, "Lads and lasses, hasten all." *May-Day* is a very different affair from *Robin Hood*, and, although, judging from the reception each meet with, the success of the two may be paralleled, I have no doubt but that only one of them is destined to make its way into public favour. For my own part I think the cantata of *May-Day* admirable throughout. Others, on the contrary—and among them a few whose opinions are worth attention—consider the first and last pieces too much elaborated. All, however, agree, that the part-song and the air with the burden are both original and beautiful. The latter, the solo very prettily sung by Miss Sherrington, was tumultuously encored. The chorus were unsteady from first to last. I was sorry that Mr. Macfarren was not present to witness the enthusiastic reception accorded to by his new work.

Madlle. Piccolomini's share of the programme included the air

* We disagree with our correspondent on all and every of these points.—Ed. M. W.

"Ah! fors'e lui," from the *Traviata*; the quartet from *Don Pasquale*, "E rimasto la impietrato," with Herr Reichardt, Signors Belletti and Beneventano; an aria from *Luisa Miller*, "Lo vidi, e'l primo;" and, with Signor Belletti, the duet, "Pronta io son," from *Don Pasquale*. Her reception was very flattering, but scarcely enthusiastic. Both ladies and gentlemen appeared too much taken up with scrutinising her personal appearance to think of applauding. She was very nervous, and did not sing the aria so well as I have heard her sing it at Her Majesty's Theatre. The *cabaletta* was better, but not quite up to the Piccolomini mark. It was, nevertheless, universally encored and repeated. The effect produced by the quartet from *Don Pasquale*, was nil. The air from *Luisa Miller* is not attractive; nor is it well suited to the means of Mdle. Piccolomini. It produced little effect, in spite of the energetic admirers of the little lady—their name in Bradford is "legion"—who attempted to encore it, but only succeeded in bringing her on to bow her acknowledgments. The admirable duet from *Don Pasquale*, between Norina and Malatesta, was a very different matter. By her own inimitable manner and "genuine singing"—mark well the inverted commas—Mdle. Piccolomini created a furor, an enthusiasm as hearty and universal as I have ever witnessed in a concert-room. Of course the duet was encored, repeated, and received as uproariously as at first. This performance, and the sensation it produced, established the position of Mdle. Piccolomini, who possesses the art of swaying the multitude to her will in a singular degree—beyond further controversy. From that moment she became the talk and the "toast" of Bradford. The gentlemen went half mad about her; and more champagne has been drank to her health since Thursday night than in the same space of time was, probably, ever drunk before in this thirsty emporium of commerce. I will relate an anecdote to prove that I do not exaggerate. One of the gentlemen connected with the administration of St. George's Hall, by some means, I know not how, obtained possession of one of Mdle. Piccolomini's gloves, and showed it to all his friends as a trophy. Sundry offers were made to him for the glove, which he declined to part with on any consideration; but he offered to allow any of his friends and acquaintances to kiss the tip of one of the fingers on payment of a sovereign!

There is hardly anything else worth specialising in the Evening Concert of Thursday. Albani was suffering from a severe cold, and could scarcely do more than whisper Rode's air with variations, and "Di piacer," both of which she was obliged to curtail. The struggle she made to sing under such circumstances, that she might not disappoint those who came to hear her, was worthy of all praise. Even last night, when her hoarseness had increased, and left her no hope of doing herself justice, Albani chose rather to come on and sing her worst, than throw any doubt on her wish to oblige the public, with whom she is so great a favourite. She is too genuine an artist for that, and the public, who love and admire this most peerless and incomparable of singers, will estimate her conduct on this occasion at its proper value. May she live a thousand years!—and that, as Lord Byron used to say, is nine hundred and ninety-nine years longer than the Spanish Cortes.

Madame Viardot, too, must be noticed for the extraordinary fluency and fire she displayed in the unheard-of bravura from Graun's *Britannicus*, and Herr Reichardt for his graceful and finished singing in Mozart's "Dalla sua pace."

Beethoven's symphony was played magnificently, and Rossini's brilliant overture, which was encored with acclamations, not less so. Mr. Costa had never greater reason to be satisfied with his orchestra.

The performance yesterday morning drew a good attendance, chiefly to the galleries, one of the attractions being the 103rd Psalm of Mr. Jackson, chorus-master at St. George's Hall. The Great Gallery, on this occasion, was opened to the public at the desirable admission-charge of 3s. 6d. To the Psalm of Mr. Jackson was added the 114th Psalm of Mendelssohn, ("When Israel out of Egypt came"); a selection from Mr. Henry Leslie's oratorio, *Immanuel*; a MS. "Credo," by Mendelssohn; *

and a miscellaneous selection of Sacred Music, sung by Mesdames Clara Novello, Viardot Garcia, and Milner, Messrs. Montem Smith, Weiss, and Sims Reeves. Albani was put down for Cherubini's "O Salutaris hostia," but an apology was made for her by Mr. Ollivier, on the plea that her indisposition was unabated.

Of Mr. Jackson's Psalm I would rather refrain from giving an opinion. It was well performed, under the composer's own direction, and uproariously applauded by his fellow townsmen. The selection from *Immanuel* did not go as well as the composer had a right to expect—the chorus being evidently overtaxed on the fourth morning. One of the finest performances of yesterday—if not the finest—was that of Mr. Sims Reeves in "Deeper and deeper still," which the audience did their best to encore, but which the singer declined to repeat. Miss Milner, too, must be praised for the effective manner in which she sang Guglielmi's "Gratias agimus," and Mr. Lazarus, for his splendid *obligato* on the clarinet; Herr Formes, no less so, for his impressive delivery of the air from *St. Paul*, "O God, have mercy upon me." The programme was far too long.

The last evening concert yesterday attracted an immense attendance, upwards of 4,000 persons being present. All the rank and fashion of Bradford and the neighbouring localities were present, and the appearance of the hall was brilliant and animated in the extreme. The large west gallery, as in the morning, was thrown open at 3s. 6d., but, the greater number of the seats having been taken previously, the concession came too late, and there were several "rows" in consequence. For a concert-room audience I have hardly seen one more ill-behaved than that of last night at St. George's Hall. Many of the pieces were interrupted, and hardly one was listened to with gravity. The programme was not so good as that of the night before, though including some gems of the first water. I never heard a more finished performance of Mendelssohn's A major Symphony—"the Italian"—which, I must own, was listened to throughout with profound attention; while the overture to *Guillaume Tell*, which we have heard executed in a more faultless style, roused the audience to enthusiasm, and provoked an encore. The chorus sang a new choral part-song, by Mrs. Mounsey Bartholomew, "The lark now leaves his wat'ry nest," and Morley's madrigal, "Now is the month of May." Both were encored, though neither was well sung. Mdle. Piccolomini was received, on her entrance, with reiterated cheers. She sang the *Brindisi*, from the *Traviata*, "Libiamo, libiamo," with Herr Reichardt and the chorus; Mozart's "Deh vieni, non tardar," from *Figaro*; and, with Herr Reichardt, the duet from *La Traviata*, "Parigi, o cara." She was encored in the *brindisi*, and repeated it. Although not altogether a finished performance I was greatly pleased with Mozart's song, since it showed me what I have all along thought, that the young artist possesses a true and earnest feeling for good music. Mdle. Piccolomini must study Mozart with faith and zeal. I am sure she would become one of his most worthy interpreters. The duet from *La Traviata* was not acceptable to the Bradford audience. An attempt was made to encore it, but in vain. This duet is nothing if not theatrical. Albani, with her cold still very bad, made a bold attempt to sing a duet from *Tancredi* with Mr. Sims Reeves, and part of the rondo finale from *La Cenerentola*. Mad. Viardot gave a very splendid reading of the recitative and aria, "Tu che accendi," from *Tancredi*, which terminates with the well-known melody of "Di tanti palpiti." Mr. Sims Reeves sang with great power Purcell's "Come, if you dare," and was encored; and Herr Formes received the same compliment in "O ruddier than the cherry." The other encores were numerous. At the end of the performance the National Anthem was sung, all the principals standing, and Mr. Weiss and the chorus singing. A series of "Three cheers" for various individuals was then originated by the gentlemen in the galleries, among which I could hear distinctly, "Mrs. Sunderland," "Mr. Smith," and "Mr. Costa." The vast audience then left the Hall, and it was long past midnight ere the last light was extinguished, and the last footfall left its echoes behind.

And so a three years farewell to the Bradford Festival!

* Introduced at the Festival of 1853.

Meanwhile I commend strongly to your notice the criticisms in the Leeds Journals, wherein you will find the most ingenious and original opinions on the singers and the music written in very questionable vernacular; and I would more particularly call your attention to the article in the *Manchester Daily Examiner and Times* of this day, in which you will learn with astonishment that the duet "Parigi, O cara" is from the *Nozze di Figaro*.

D. R.

BEETHOVEN.*

(Concluded from p. 518).

Such a man was necessarily, in the eyes of his contemporaries, the dangerous innovator—the hateful Utopian, who, to use a favourite expression of the criticism of the period (see Op. 72), "sacrificed to what was new and strange, what was beautiful in works," the foundation and aim of which had still solely been the Beautiful, for only a vivid feeling for that quality enables and impels us to seek to strike out "new" paths for it. Thus it came to pass that, in the *Freimüthiger* for the year 1806, the following estimate of one of the greatest creations of human intellect was in any way possible:—"A short time since the overture to *Fidelio* was performed in the Augarten, and all unprejudiced musical connoisseurs were unanimous in declaring that anything so unconnected, glaring, confused, and revolting to the ear had certainly never been written before. The most cutting modulations follow each other, in truly horrible harmony, and two or three petty ideas, which completely dissipate all appearance of loftiness, such, for instance, as a solo for the post-horn, intended, *we presume*, to announce the arrival of the governor, complete the disagreeable and deafening impression."

How naturally genial and striking must not this intention be, when, through it, such a hopelessly blind, sneering coxcomb could hit upon the idea that—"it marked, *we presume*, the arrival of the governor."

We must, for the honour of Weber, believe that these expressions of a prejudice which went so far as to accord to the *Prometheus* overture, that is to say, to an innocent freckle upon Beethoven's youthful cheek, the preference over the great *Fidelio* overture, did not emanate from Weber's pen, to which people would attribute them. The intentions of this overture of overtures, its dramatizing of situations and individuals, by means of instruments, and of the language and spirit of the drama, felt and rendered instrumentally in the sphere of infinity, have, at any rate, produced *Der Freischütz* as an offshoot, and held all the effect-overtures of modern times at the baptismal font! They have been, at any rate, regularly pillaged by Weber, Mendelssohn, Meyerbeer, and by heaven knows whom besides.

Only a dramatic mind, like Beethoven's, could have made his overture fall into two parts through the prophetic trumpet-blast—namely, first, into the exposition of human destiny in the drama, and, second, into the human sympathy placed in the orchestra, as that of a second something standing above the drama, like the chorus above antique tragedy, and gradually rising to indescribable ecstasy at the deliverance of the victim! Another song to joy! The trumpet-blast would seem to imply that the orchestra says to one of its members, as Queen Isabeau says to the Squire, in Schiller's *Jungfrau von Orleans*:—

"Steig' auf die Warte dort, die nach dem Feld
Hin steht, und siehe, wie die Schlacht sich wendet."

The trumpet-solo announcing the deliverance comes from the stage ("trumpet on the stage," says the score). It is precisely this which is the happiest blending of theatre and orchestra into the universal stage of life. A great many trumpets have sounded from the stage since that time. But no one worth mentioning has ever again ventured such a combination of the theatre and the orchestra, of the world on one side the curtain and that on the other. This magnificent overture ought, for these reasons, only to be played in a theatre, and never in concert-rooms. If people wish to perform it out of the theatre,

the trumpet-blast ought to proceed from another room, if only to cause the public to inquire: "for what motive the trumpet was sent away?" The anatomist can, it is true, carry his preparations into the lecture-room, but the soul can only be heard in the limits adequate to it.

We read in a *Correspondenznachricht*, some thirty years since: "Bückeburg, the 15th April. The whole of our town, generally so quiet, was, to-day, on its legs. A sight, as interesting as it was unusual in Bückeburg, attracted old and young into the streets. A group of *flamingos*, slowly proceeding in a northerly direction, floated over the town. With the purple colour of their brilliant plumage the beautiful creatures appeared like balls of fire in the blue atmosphere of an unclouded day. The sight was charming and inspiring. The gentry of the place followed with telescopes the guests who had thus wandered out of their way to us."

Just as these flamingos are to the Bückeburg geese, so is the great C major overture of Beethoven's opera, to the petty affairs of social life.

A further discussion of the great *Fidelio* overture, from the simple and yet so grand motive of the allegro, until, just to mention one thing more, the two sighs in the 188th bar, which in the 224th advance to their redemption, two pearl drops on the chalice of a flower in the land of aspirations—a more detailed discussion of this Beethovenian microcosm would be a reconstruction of the master's life and being, two perfectly identical ideas in Beethoven; a monography to which the author will in this place only allude.

The mention of *Fidelio* here must be regarded merely as an opportunity for explaining critically why, long after his death, Beethoven was misunderstood and persecuted.

Experience teaches us that, in the whole ladder of life, from the man of business up to the poet, at each round, one misfortune is more hurtful to the man dependent on the judgment of the public, than repeated successes are advantageous to him. Every public judges, without respect for persons and circumstances, by results. *Fidelio* had been but moderately successful; it had been coldly received, and the composer had withdrawn it after the third representation (see Op. 72).

The public was guided by this result. In a work that glorified one of the most lauded feelings of any age, namely, true conjugal love, to which Beethoven lent, perhaps, the traits of that *Eleonore*, whom his warm heart probably still recollected from the years of his childhood in the house of the Breunings (see above, Wegeler's letter), in this apotheosis by the artist of a feeling lost for the man, the public, including the master's artistic contemporaries, saw merely a *Spanish* subject, used by Bouilly for a French opera composed by Gaveau; subsequently adopted by Ferdinand Paer, in an *Italian Leonore*, and now transferred, *bi-cephalic* (*Leonore Fidelio*) into a fourth language.

—That it was these accidental circumstances which necessarily destroyed the charm of novelty, and caused Beethoven's share in the subject to appear only as a new edition⁶ was a fact the Public did not see. The public merely compared, a piece of stupidity of which no public will ever divest itself. Now the logic of every public only goes so far as to enable it to say to itself: "Since our dearly-beloved Paer's music to *Leonore* is something quite different, therefore Beethoven's is no music at all."

The conviction thus gained, poor Beethoven's artistic contemporaries should have set to music and performed as a cantata. As no one can see himself, they silently passed over the fact, that they were not even capable of judging Beethoven, far less his opera, and were no more able to see its beauties than a negro is to see the beauty of a white.

And who pronounced judgment? A Viennese public, assisted by the most unmusical portion of all the inhabitants of Europe, the officers of a French army, only seven days after the capture of Vienna by Napoleon, on the 20th November, 1805. Beethoven would have been more successful had he scored "*J'ai du bon tabac!*"

Causa victrix Diis placet, deviata Catoni! The only Cato, however, to be found in Vienna was Beethoven himself, and therefore his opera pleased him sufficiently to cause him, after the third experiment, in order to cough the cataract under which

* Translated expressly for the *Musical World* by J. V. BRIDGEMAN.

the people's eyes suffered, to withdraw it altogether. Beethoven was condemned in Vienna. It is in the fatal minor circumstances which co-operated in the choice of the subject and the performance of the opera itself, that we must look for the principal reason of the want of understanding displayed by his contemporaries. One step more, and people came to this further result: "Poor Beethoven's opera" (Beethoven happened to be richer in ideas than Vienna with all its suburbs) "has now at last been completely unsuccessful, consequently, nothing else of his can or ought to please."

In addition to this, Beethoven was the outlaw who had broken his ban, and against whom the arrows of satire and the still sharper ones of ingratitude had to be directed. Yet Beethoven had done much, in order, wherever it was possible, to pay homage, in the scenes which offer a picture of Rocco's domestic arrangements, and are the medium between the upper and lower world of *Fidelio*, to the taste rendered popular by Mozart. It is not until the composer in the dungeon descends "Zu dem Manne der nicht mehr lebt, und wie ein Schatten schwebt"† that he becomes the real Beethoven, who digs the victim's grave in the ruined cistern. Both the style and substance of the marriage matters treated of in the introductory pieces, and of which childlike element belonging not to Beethoven's genius but to his good nature, is not sufficiently interesting, are to be ascribed to the tendencies of a period when the regular theatre-goer, the good citizen and father of a family felt "more comfortable" (*gemüthlicher*) when he did not too often meet upon the stage individuals superior in station to himself, but rather such as were only equal or subordinate to him, and thus more easily reminded him of his breeding-cage for canaries, his nursery at home! A go-between was necessary between the stage and life! This is the motive, the *raison d'être* of the Leporellos, the Papagenos, the billings-and-cooings in Rocco's cottage, the jovial Kilian, in *Der Freischütz*, who shoots better than the huntsman, of the heroically virtuous sergeants and servants in Lessing and Iffland, imitations of Sancho-Panza and Falstaff, to name the primitive types.

In Beethoven's time, the stage was still a kind of court of appeal for civil life. What had been sanctioned there, had attained the force of law in life. Consequently, the affairs in Rocco's house had to be rendered similar to those in that of the regular play goer, and the Marcellina's were contented that the more interesting *Fidelio* should be preferred to the every day Jacquinio, whom they knew only too well. In our days, occupied, as they are, by great social and political experiments, the theatre is only an article of fashion in opera; the scene of action of a feeling of curiosity in the drama, separated from life itself, and soon blunted.

In the first pieces of *Fidelio*, and even in the transition of the 33rd bar of the chorus of prisoners, and in the 36th of Pizarro's aria, there is more of the Mozart element than in the instrumental compositions of Beethoven's first period, but this is not so immediately apparent because Mozart's influence is not, as in Beethoven's first attempts just mentioned, an involuntary one, but one *wrung from* the master who had already attained the highest pitch of originality. This influence of Mozart's taste in trifles is concealed but not suspended by more far-fetched harmonies, such as are especially found in the second trio.

Rocco's air, for instance, "Hat man nicht auch Gold beineben," is a mere street-ballad, after the Papageno model, with the transition into the 6-8 and not at *tempo* "das Glück wie ein Knecht," an ephemera which would have been in its proper place in a piece interspersed with songs, in a small Teniers, but not in *Leonore*, in a grand Salvator Rosa. The music perfectly agrees with the spirit of the situation, but the situation does not agree with Beethoven's spirit, which cannot succeed in saying anything insignificant, and which must have regarded this piece as a necessary evil, as an *experimentum in anima vili*.

With what difficulty the composer of "Adelaide," so ideal in his tendencies, digested the jailor's sugary daughter, is proved by the fact that he composed three times Marcellina's aria, "O, wär' ich schon mit Dir vereint," although it could not have

* "To the man who no longer lives, and floats about but as a shadow,"

had for him the importance of a singing bird. Jacquinio remains even into the profound first quartet: "Mir ist so wunderbar" 6-4, an uninteresting lout, whose place ought to have been in a mill and not in a fortress encompassing the drama.

All this domesticity of Rocco *without his keys* was not adapted for Beethoven, who, himself a victim, could only glorify Florestan pining in his dungeon. Even the charming duet: "Um in der Ehe froh zu leben, muss man vor Allem treu sich sein" has a dash of Sunday finery about it, which throws a chill over an action, the foundation of which is a prison. The composer raised it by a *tempo* 9-8ths, employed by him only in a few beautiful adagios (first quartet, septet, sonata, Op. 22, Op. 31, No. 1; Clärchen, too, dies in 9-8. Compare the profound variations of the Sonata, Op. 109, where Beethoven passes with such satisfaction from 3-4ths into 9-8ths). The situation of the duet is deficient in interest, because it is false. Marcellina pines for the day that shall unite her to *Fidelio*, who, we know, conceals the great Leonore. The interest is centred in the music as such, as a means of gratifying the ear, and which the composer has ornamented with so-called agreeable passages in sixths, trills, small vocal cadences, and pretty consonances; but in doing this, he was enabled to display more good will than fine and inimitable genius, for this marriage-duet of two persons who cannot by any possibility marry each other, derives, from this fact, a colouring which is not comic and which is not tragic, but which is false, and whose only result is a piece which, as such, was admirably composed. But what particularly distinguishes Beethoven's act is that it does not, like the Italian school, stop at the ear, but, in great and lofty ideas, speaks through the ear to the inward man, awakening noble thoughts and magnanimous resolves. When Beethoven abandons this path, he abandons himself. In the subject of *Leonore* he had perceived the faithful wife, triumphing over every difficulty, as genius always grasps the kernel, and not the husk. He did not hit upon Rocco and those around him in the first act, until the lower world of the dungeon—the triumph to be celebrated by virtue over it—had vanquished the flat over-world, which had, nevertheless, to be disposed of in the score. This exposition would scarcely have increased in interest, had it been laid a story higher in the residence of the Governor. But even in this frame we find great beauties, only not Beethoven. Perhaps the phrase addressed by Marcellina to Leonore in the second trio: "Dein gutes Herz wird manchen Schmerz in diesen Gräben leiden," was the origin of the masterly carrying out of opposite characters in Agatha and Aennchen's duet in *Der Freischütz*, as Pizarro's vengeance-breathing air, "Ha! welch' ein Augenblick" became Caspar's air of vengeance in *Der Freischütz*. Beethoven's observation is known: "I should never have believed that weakly little man, Weber, could have created Caspar—a fellow who stands as firm as a 'house' before you!" Beethoven did not add, in his own mind, that in *this house* whole stories belonged to him, because true genius never keeps in view what it has done, but only what is still to be created. *Nihil actum reputans si quidquid agendum reliquit*. Even when Beethoven had composed the Choral Symphony, in comparison with which Weber's magnificent overtures are, after all, mere lance-splinters, this *opus stupendum* was already lost, in his mind, in the Tenth Symphony, which, without doubt, would have given the symphony style new form, new substance, and a more extended compass, and have found its programme in the *universum*. Only a Frenchman, only a conservatory director, only Fétis, could have invented a fable about the exceedingly unimportant *Allegretto Posthume* for orchestra (see Letter in fourth section of the catalogue), a shred of Beethoven's swaddling clothes, having been destined for the Tenth Symphony—the Unutterable! the Infinite! An error of conjectural criticism without a parallel!

GUERNSEY.—On Friday evening, August 29, Mr. Brinley Richards gave a concert, at which he played all his latest and most popular school pieces, besides some of the minor compositions of Mendelssohn. Mr. Richards was much applauded by the audience and the press. The newspapers are always kind to Mr. Richards wherever he encounters them. (Vide the *Guernsey Star*.)

THE LATE MADAME VESTRIS.

(Concluded from page 558.)

On Friday, the 31st of May, after the conclusion of *Dr. Dilworth*, Madame Vestris delivered a farewell address, in which she said:—

"For the ninth time I have the honour to drop my courtesy and my curtain at the close of a prosperous season, for which, in Mr. Mathews' name and my own, I beg to offer you our best acknowledgments. There have been peculiar circumstances connected with the season about to conclude, which 'I conclude,' I had better say but little about. I may, however, safely and truly say that I left you with unfeigned regret, and returned to you with unbounded joy: and though it must be confessed that the mode in which you manifested your regret at my absence was more calculated to feed my vanity than my treasury, your kindness since my return has left the latter nothing to complain of. Encouraged by the approbation my managerial efforts have received, we have become lessees of the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden. I am aware that we shall have many difficulties to contend with. We propose to face them manfully and womanly, to preserve the good points of former managements, and reject the bad: to take with us the best results of my experience here, and to trust to the public to do the rest. Some kind friends have already prophesied that I shall not succeed there. My only answer is that, nine years ago, they said I should never succeed here."

Covent-Garden opened under the new management, on Monday, September the 30th, 1839, with the opera of *Artaxerxes*. Miss Austin, a pupil of Mr. T. Welsh, making her debut as Mandane. The following Thursday, the *School for Scandal* was given, well; and on the 4th of November, a new play, called *Love*, by Sheridan Knowles, was produced—thus showing that the performances would involve variety, if there were no other excellence, the three first representations comprising opera, comedy, and a serious drama. It is not necessary to speak at length of Madame Vestris's management, which lasted three years, during which time a number of new pieces were produced—several new and talented artists appeared—and many successes were achieved. The third and last season of the Covent-Garden management, under Mr. and Mrs. Charles Mathews, was brought to a termination on the 30th of April, 1842, when the gentleman delivered a farewell address, in which he stated that the failure of the speculation was owing to enormous interest paid to Jew money-lenders, to law expenses consequent thereon, and to the "starring-system"—a tacit acknowledgment on his part that he and Madame Vestris were totally unfit to govern a theatre.

Little remains now to be said of the subsequent career of the artist. For several years Mr. and Mrs. Charles Mathews pursued the common course of actors, at one time of the year appearing in London, at one or other of the theatres—at the Haymarket, Princess's, or Surrey—and "starring it" during their *congé*, as it is called, in the provinces. At the Liverpool Theatre, on the 22nd of January, 1847, Madame Vestris delivered a farewell address, in which she appeared to take leave of the stage, but appeared, nevertheless, at the Theatre Royal, Manchester, on February 21st.

The management of the Lyceum theatre by Mr. and Mrs. Charles Mathews of late years, and its various fortunes, are fresh in the recollection of everybody. Its successes and failures, its reputation and its *prestige*, are well known. Had Madame Vestris's health permitted, it is just possible that the Lyceum Theatre would have gone on prosperously, and eventually have established itself on firm grounds, as the Olympic did long before. But Fate had otherwise willed it. Madame Vestris, for some years past, had periodical attacks, which prevented her from appearing on the stage, and finally precluded all hope of her again resuming her professional avocations. She appeared for the last time in public, at the Lyceum, on Wednesday, July 26, 1854, on the occasion of Mr. Charles Mathews's benefit, in *Sunshine through the Clouds*. About six months since her disorder took a favourable turn, and she became so much better, that her friends entertained reasonable hopes that she might be able to appear in the course of the summer. A fresh attack, however, ensued, worse than ever, which baffled the skill of the physicians, and, after many months of suffering, endured

with great patience, Madame Vestris expired on Saturday morning, the 9th of August, 1856, in the 60th year of her age according to some accounts—according to others, in the 64th; and was buried in Kensal Green Cemetery, on Thursday, the 14th of August.

So passed from this life one of the most remarkable women of her time, whose name, for little less than half a century, was a household word in the mouths of the public. Madame Vestris had her faults as a woman as well as an actress; but they are buried with her, and we have no desire to rake them up from her grave. Let it be hoped that in her case the application of the poet's words may be reversed:—

"The evil that men do lives after them—
The good is oft interred with their bones."

In writing this sketch our motto has been *de mortuis nil nisi bonum*, and we have kept it reverentially before our eyes.

MR. ALBERT SMITH'S MONT BLANC.

THE season was brought to a close on Saturday last. At the end of the performance, Mr. Albert Smith addressed the audience as follows:—

"And now, Ladies and Gentlemen, as the Monarch of Mountains is unable to leave his throne of rocks at present, from the pressure of tourists and excursionists, I am compelled to prorogue his parliament, by deputy, myself; and I will, therefore, according to established form, read my speech, I hope 'in that clear and distinct voice' the reporters usually connect with that ceremony.

"My Lords, Ladies and Gentlemen,

"The period having arrived when you require some relaxation from the incessant labour and fatigue you must have undergone, during the past Session, from hearing me tell the same long story, over and over again, I feel a few words are due from me to you, not only respecting the present, but the future.

"I continue to receive the most friendly assurances from Foreign Powers, on my passport, of 'permission to pass freely, and aid and protection in case of need,' of which I am about immediately to avail myself, as I hope, for your future amusement. His Majesty, the King of the Belgians, has by his consulate *visé*, placed the travelling resources of his charming country at my disposal, in accordance with the treaty of fares laid down in the 'Continental Bradshaw.' His Majesty the King of Prussia has thrown open the navigation of the Rhine to me, subject simply to the adherence to the tariff of prices, between Cologne and Mayence, as issued by the *Kölnische Gesellschaft* Company: and our gallant ally, the King of Sardinia, has granted me permission to cross the Alps, between Switzerland and Piedmont, by any pass between the Col du Bonhomme and the Simplon, practicable for troops—of tourists.

"The gambling tables, at Baden, will occupy my extreme attention; and the still helpless and lamentable state of Brown, everywhere on the Continent, calls for the most earnest measures to alleviate those miseries which cloud his tour, and turn his holiday into a prolonged excursion of imaginary extortion, self-created irritation, disappointed anticipation, and misunderstood behaviour.

"Ladies and Gentlemen of the Area and Gallery,

"I have directed supplies of fresh seats to be laid under you before we next meet. Considering that the absolute comfort of the public is the very first thing that ought to be attended to in any resort intended for, and supported by, them, without the compulsion of an extra payment—that the miserable system of extorting every extractable sixpence from the audience, by the combined agencies of box-keepers, box-book-keepers, bill-sellers, and saloon-keepers (in whose toils our managers appear to be so hopelessly entangled), is a shame and a disgrace to our public places of amusement—considering this, I shall still endeavour to improve your condition and prospects; your condition, as far as your individual case is concerned; your prospects, as may relate to a clear, comfortable view of everything that is going on. As heretofore—every reasonable complaint or suggestion will receive my best and readiest attention; and as heretofore, the price of admission will include

every possible auxiliary to comfort and accommodation that the room, or the attendants can offer.

"My Lords, Ladies, and Gentlemen,

"Having had the honour of telling you the same story in the same room fourteen hundred and eighty-two times, up to this evening, I will not venture to refer to it, for you must know it almost as well as I do. But you must permit me to add, that I now release you, from your flattering attention, until the middle of November, when I return from the Continent. And, until that time, wishing you every possible enjoyment and happiness, that you most desire yourselves, I bid you, very gratefully, Good bye."

NOTICE.

It is requested that all communications intended for the *Musical World* be addressed to the Editor only, and not to any persons supposed to be connected with this journal.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MRS. SUNDERLAND'S ABSENCE FROM THE BRADFORD FESTIVAL.—

We have not space for any further letters on this subject.

F. G.—*The paper shall appear in an early number.*

V. FURNIVALL.—*We shall be glad to have a sight of the MSS. referred to.*

THE MUSICAL WORLD.

LONDON, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 6TH, 1856.

AMONG the rest of its manufactures, the good town of Birmingham has just taken on itself to build and equip a new music hall—a report of the opening of which will be found in another part of our columns. So far as the fact itself is concerned, its interest may be said to be almost purely local. It is, of course, gratifying at any time to recognise such solid and practical indications of spirit and liberality. Unquestionably refreshing is it to be made aware that, in a town where toil and bustle are the paramount conditions of existence, enough of unselfish enthusiasm for art remains to induce a number of amateurs to incur the risk of such an undertaking as has this week been inaugurated. Still, if this were all, the interest of the operation would, as aforesaid, be far more local than general. If Birmingham ventures the cost, Birmingham also reaps the benefit. It would be our duty to deal with the completion of the new music hall as with any other piece of intelligence, and to say neither less nor more about the matter than it was immediately worth.

The present case, however, appears to involve questions of far more importance than the risk of speculators, or the creditable vanity of those who desire to increase the attractions of their native town. In any meddling with the party-politics stirred up on this occasion, we have no intention to share. The new music-room-scheme has, of course, a host of enemies in Birmingham. It is, for instance, very industriously condemned as an uncalled for and impertinent opposition to the old Town Hall. All this we mention merely to reprobate the bitter and sectarian spirit but too abundantly displayed. The real and important interest of the new undertaking is contained in the fact that it is undoubtedly the expression of a musical want which could be supplied in no other way. The plain and simple statement of the truth appears to be that, in proportion to its importance, wealth, and desires, Birmingham is extremely ill-provided with good musical performances. Its festivals, to be sure, are the finest things of their kind in the world; but they occur but once in three years, and the interval between them is all but an utter blank so far as

music is concerned. Each festival is just sufficient to stimulate the public appetite, which is thereupon systematically starved, with a view, it seems, of whetting it for its next triennial repast. A large section of the Birmingham people, it appears, are not satisfied to be fed after this boa-constrictor fashion. They desire a more general supply of good musical performances, and the Festival Committee—in other words, the Committee of the General Hospital—are resolved to afford them only just when and how they think most conducive to the interests of their favourite charity. The Hospital Committee, indeed, have never made any secret of their policy in this matter. They have always decried the frequent performance of oratorios, especially in the town, on the assumption that the pecuniary success of their festivals would be thereby certainly damaged. In other words, music, *per se*, was to them nothing, unless as an apology for levying a triennial impost on the pockets of their fellow-townsmen. Now, even supposing their qualms in this matter to stand on the faintest shadow of probability, we really do not see why a notoriously wealthy charity should be permitted thus greedily to interfere with the progress of music. We can imagine no tenable reason why the General Hospital should not flourish, and the inhabitants of Birmingham still have as much good music as they can digest. But, in point of fact, there never was reasoning more false than that on which the Festival Committee have hitherto acted. Grant their motives to have been utterly pure, the results, we are convinced, have been positively damaging to the cause intended to be served. Everywhere, and under all circumstances, experience has made it absolutely demonstrable that familiarity with the great productions of art increases the public delight in them, and, by consequence—descending to the commercial view of the matter—augments the number of those willing to pay for their enjoyment. The Festival Committee, however, have hitherto acted on the opposite assumption; and, among the inevitable results of this narrow and mistaken policy, is the strange fact that, with all its commercial and intellectual importance, Birmingham is, both in acquaintance with great musical works, and in instrumental and choral resources of *its own* for their performance, greatly behind Manchester, Liverpool, Norwich, and other places of even less note.

Meanwhile, it had become evident to those who really loved music in Birmingham that the time for independent action had arrived; and the new Music Hall has sprung up, at once an expression of the want we have described, and of determination to venture all that money and zeal can contribute towards supplying it. Its promoters, we are assured, have foresworn everything like meanness or undue partizanship in its management. They have resolved to abstain from all petty warfare with the opposition they may encounter, and to persevere steadily with their object of benefitting the executive resources of their town. We sincerely wish them prosperity.

It is but too intelligible that, with the weighty influences brought to bear against the project, the "Inauguration Festival" of the new Music Hall should have been far from successful in a pecuniary sense. Everything is said to be fair in war. It may be so; but without attempting to controvert so time-honoured a proposition, we may fairly be allowed to question the spirit and propriety of the measures resorted to in some quarters to damage the new undertaking. Ludicrous as it may seem, reports were busily circulated that the building was "unsafe;" while we were still more surprised to learn, that members of the Hospital

Committee—gentlemen by position and affluence—could condescend to the undignified course of personally canvassing their friends *against* the very spirited attempt in behalf of good music. All is not gold, however, which glitters; and, perhaps, in these latter instances, that electro-gilding process for which Birmingham is famous had been just so thinly applied as to rub off and shew the base metal beneath, on the smallest frictional provocation.

ORGAN.

THE NEW MUSIC HALL AT BIRMINGHAM & ITS ORGAN.

(Continued from page 557.)

It is now time to draw attention to some of the mechanical peculiarities of the Birmingham Organ. First of these, we must notice the distribution of the wind; in which, *separation* and the increasing pressure system are carried to a greater extent than in any previous English example. As this system adds materially to the cost of an organ, it may be worth while to devote a few lines in this place to an explanation of its advantages. Until within the last few years, the English organ, with all its fine qualities, has been, on one important point, a total mistake. It was the taste of the past generation—descending, unfortunately, far into the present one—to have gruff and ponderous basses, accompanied by weak and effeminate trebles; and, on this plan, all organ-music in which important passages in the upper range of the instrument were supported by full harmony in the tenor and lower parts of the scale, became unintelligible. A similar evil was experienced elsewhere, though not to so great an extent as in this country. The first and obvious attempt at a remedy was to diminish the scales of the basses, and proportionately enlarge those of the trebles. But a well-known principle stepped in to interfere with the result. Pipes under-blown are as bad as those over-blown, and while, therefore, the large-scaled trebles were supplied only with the same air-pressure as the small-scaled basses, the evil was merely altered, not removed. To Cavallée, of Paris, is due the application of an increasing pressure of air, co-relative with the increasing scale of the pipes in ascending from the lower to the upper octaves; and thus, for the first time, was secured a just balance of power over the whole compass of the instrument.

This system is in gradual course of introduction in this country, and with the happiest results. By its operation, the performer has, at length, the power of giving to florid passages their natural importance, whatever force of accompaniment they may have to contend against. In the Birmingham instrument the Great Organ sound-boards are so divided as to admit of four distinct weights of wind. Up to the middle of its compass, all the flue-work (except the harmonic flutes) has a pressure of $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and from thence to the top the pressure is $3\frac{1}{4}$ inches. The reeds and harmonic flutes commence with a pressure of $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches, which is increased, at the middle of their range, to 5 inches. In the Swell Organ a similar division is provided,—the air-pressure being $2\frac{1}{2}$ and $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches, for the basses and trebles respectively. A series of small reservoirs, weighted to the required pressures, are placed in close proximity to the great organ and swell sound-boards, delivering their wind by the shortest possible trunks, and receiving their supply—through the intervention of self-acting stop-valves—from the main reservoirs on the ground-floor. Since, by this arrangement, *no manual part of the organ is alimented directly from the reservoirs into which the feeders deliver their supply*, there results from it, as one consequence, the most perfect steadiness of wind under all circumstances; while the different pressures, which it is specially designed to distribute, impart an effect of grandeur, force, and brilliancy to the great organ more particularly, which, considering its small number of registers, we do not remember to have heard equalled. It was not considered necessary to apply this system to the Choir or Pedal organs; but in the latter the reeds are supplied with a higher air-pressure than the flue-work.

The construction of the Pneumatic Apparatus—which is neces-

sarily applied to the Great Manual of an organ of this class—presents a novelty very well worthy of attention. The circular drop-valves used, in all the French, and most of the English, examples of this mechanism, for the supply and exhaustion of the motive bellows, are here discarded in favour of *slide-valves*, precisely similar in form and operation to the slide-valve of a locomotive-engine, and, like it, kept tight by the pressure of the elastic fluid they are appointed to distribute. This species of valve, though found to act admirably in the Pneumatic draw-stop movement recently applied to the organ in St. George's Chapel, Windsor, was considered open to certain theoretical objections, if placed in connection with so rapid and delicate an agent as the performer's finger. These objections were, indeed, felt on a first trial; but the dimensions of the "ports" and the "throw" of the valves—to speak in engineering phrase—having undergone revision, the apparatus is found to operate in the most satisfactory manner, the touch being extremely prompt and exquisitely light. Should nothing objectionable be hereafter found to arise from the nature of the material in which the work is necessarily executed, this new construction of the Pneumatic Lever will prove of much importance. It greatly simplifies the apparatus, must reduce its cost by fully one third, and offers, certainly, the smallest possible chance of derangement.

Another mechanical novelty in this instrument is the kind of action employed to transmit to the Great Organ sound-boards (double palletted throughout, it must be remembered) the power derived from the Pneumatic Apparatus. In consequence of the comparatively small depth allowed to the instrument, the two Great Organ sound-boards are widely separated by the interposition of the entire Choir Organ; and as the distance between the extreme pallets of the Great Organ is thus too large to permit the use of a roller-board with safety, a new kind of movement has been devised which has all the virtues ascribed to the "Direct Action System," without any of the disadvantages which that much-lauded method certainly entails. The new mechanism is very simple in operation, but almost impossible to describe without the aid of a drawing. It is similar in effect to that employed, for like reasons, by Mr. Hill at the Panopticon; but it is less complex and acts with less resistance from friction.

The seven composition pedals—three to the Swell and four to the Great Organ—operate on the slides by the intervention of pneumatic pressure, the apparatus being precisely the same in principle—though, of course, on a much increased scale—as that used for the Great Organ manual. The performer will at once appreciate this application of the Pneumatic Lever. In place of the violent and disagreeable exertion often necessary on the old system, he finds the stops springing in or out by groups with all possible promptness, in obedience to a pressure on the pedal not exceeding a few ounces, and, therefore, wholly insignificant.

To all this we have only to add that the interior work of the instrument, whether novel or of ordinary kind, is finished with very praiseworthy care and accuracy. In general design, execution, and evident determination to ameliorate the condition of organ-mechanism, it worthily stands among the best specimens of modern English structure, and is, certainly, the most ably-completed instrument we have seen from the hands of its builders.

Of the *tone* of the Birmingham organ it is impossible to speak otherwise than in the very highest terms. The Great Manual, especially, considering its limited number of registers, is in our experience, quite unrivalled. Indeed, it is almost impossible for the listener to believe the grand and striking volume of tone it pours forth is solely derived from the thirteen stops which it contains. Several circumstances combine to produce this excellent result. There are no halved or incomplete stops in this manual; a very judicious style of scaling has been employed; the increasing pressure system contributes its full share to the work; and last, though by no means least, the voicing is of absolutely first-rate quality. Not a stop is allowed to say less or more than is set down for it—not a single pipe is permitted to shirk an atom of its allotted part in the general effect. And yet, with all its force, there is nothing rank or harsh about it; it is all *music* from first to last. Were so much

is excellent it is difficult to extract points for special commendation. A few of these, however, ought not to be passed over. The reeds, for example, are superb. The harmonic flutes, also, have surprising force, brilliance, and liquidity of tone. It has been found impossible to carry the 8-feet harmonic flute, with any effect, lower than fiddle G; from this note downwards, in the present instance, the scale is completed by open wood pipes; and it is worth remarking with what skill the voicer has concealed the break between the fundamental and harmonic series of sounds—so much so, indeed, that the whole scale may be played over without the change being manifest, unless to a very practised ear. The difficulty here overcome can only be properly estimated by those conversant with the peculiarities of this kind of register. The mixtures, too, have extraordinary breadth and sonorous brilliancy. They are somewhat peculiar from the effective nature of their *breaks*, and—in deference to the supposed antagonism of equal temperament to perfect thirds in the compound stops—from a total absence of tierce ranks from their composition.

The Swell is a fine and effective manual, containing beautiful reeds, and, among them, one—the *oboe*—the most admirable stop of its class we have yet heard. The Choir, also, is replete with beauties,—foremost among them, perhaps, standing the delicious *corno di bassetto*, a reed which, in the lovely character and perfect equality of its tone to the lowest extreme of its compass, has certainly never been surpassed. The *viol da gamba*, in this manual, is of the true Schulze-Töpfer school, and, when combined with the *salcional*—in order to abate that unpleasant extreme of *slowness* inevitable in stops of this character—has a truly charming effect. Its tone is singularly pungent and searching without disagreeably approaching hardness; and, as a matter of variety and individual character, its introduction will have important use in the English organ.

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In closing our notice of the Birmingham organ, we have sincere pleasure in congratulating Messrs. Gray and Davison on the completion of an instrument so remarkable and beautiful, and in expressing our confidence that it will abundantly proclaim its own merits when heard at the forthcoming festival.

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He died at two o'clock on the morning of the 21st, after having retired to rest between eleven and twelve.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your very obliged,

EMMA CELLI.

70, Welbeck-street, 4th September, 1856.

THE ORGAN CONCERTS AT ST. GEORGE'S HALL.

(From the Liverpool Mail.)

As Mr. Best has now completed the first year of his appointment as organist of St. George's Hall, it may not be uninteresting to our readers to present a *résumé* of the public organ performances, which we have compiled from the printed programmes and other sources of information. The first performance to which the public were admitted, on payment, took place on Saturday, October 20th, 1855, and, since that date up to August 7th (the past month), when the last organ concert was given, there have been 77 performances. Although it was very much doubted at first whether the public would be permanently attracted to hear the organ alone, it must be confessed that the experiment has proved most successful and gratifying. The attendance at the first concert, last year, numbered about one thousand persons;—at the last, which took place on the 7th of last month, upwards of 1,300 persons were present. The organ concerts now appear to be established on a firm and permanent basis, and one of the secrets of their success evidently lies in the raised character of music which Mr. Best contrives to present to successive audiences. An analysis of the programmes shows that during the series of 77 concerts, the aggregate number of 211 different compositions have been performed, which we will now proceed to classify:—

MUSIC BY COMPOSERS FOR THE ORGAN.

Concertos by Handel. Sonatas by Mendelssohn. Offertories by Lefebvre-Wely. Concerto by Rinck. Miscellaneous Organ Pieces by Hesse, Freyer, Kullak, Best, W. S. Bach, Handel, and Rinck. Preludes and Fugues by J. S. Bach.

ORATORIO AND OTHER SACRED MUSIC.

SONGS BY HANDEL, viz.:—"What though I trace," "Angels ever bright and fair," "Let me wander not unseen," "Honour and arms," "He was despised," "From mighty kings," "Verdi prati," "O lovely peace," "He layeth the beams," "Let the bright seraphim," "O had I Jubel's lyre," "Hush ye pretty warbling choir," "Love sounds the alarm," "O ruddier than the cherry."

CHORUSES BY HANDEL:—"From the censor," "Let their celestial concerts," "May no rash intruder," "Oh, the pleasure of the plains," "Hallelujah," "For unto us," "The king shall rejoice," "But as for his people," "He gave them hailstones," "How excellent," "Sing unto god," "Behold the Lamb of God," "The Coronation Anthem," "Your harps and cymbals sound."

SACRED MUSIC BY MOZART:—Motet, "Splendete te Deus;" Quartet, "Recordare;" Air, "Agnus Dei," and Chorus, "Donna nobis;" Chorus, "Gloria in excelsis;" Quartet, "Benedictus," and Chorus, "Hosanna." (Requiem.)

SACRED MUSIC:—By Haydn—Air, "On mighty wings;" Chorus, "The heavens are telling;" Quartet "Ex incarnatus;" Air, "With verdure clad." By Rossini—Trio "Tantum ergo;" Chorus, "La carita;" Prayer, "Dal tuo stellato;" Air, "Cujus animam;" Chorus, "Ex inflammatus;" Air, "Pro peccatis;" Quartet, "Quando corpus;" Air, "Fac ut portem;" Quartet, "Sancta mater" (*Stabat Mater*). By Beethoven—Chorus, "Hallelujah" (*Mount of Olives*). By Lindpaintner—Chorus, "Hosanna, Son of David." By Mendelssohn—Air, "If with all your hearts;" Chorus, "Be not afraid;" Air, "Oh, rest in the Lord;" Air, "Hear ye, Israel" (*Elijah*). By Winter—Trio, "O Jesu, O pastor bonus."

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC.

By Beethoven:—The "Andantes" from the 1st, 2nd, and 7th Symphonies; the "Adagio" from the Sonata, op. 2; "Andante with Variations," from the Septuor. By Mendelssohn:—"Adagio," from the 3rd Symphony; "Andante," from the Trio in C minor. By Mozart:—"Andante," from the 9th Symphony; "Adagio," from the 5th Symphony; "Andante," from the Quintett in C minor. By Bach:—"Gavotta," from an Overture. By Handel:—"Air with Variations," from the "Suites des pibees;" "The Harmonious Blacksmith." By Fecca:—"Romanza" (op. 56.) By Haydn:—"Allegretto," from the Military Symphony; "Romanza," from the Symphony, "La Reine de France;" "Andante," from the 3rd Symphony; "Andante," from the 1st Symphony; "Adagio" and "Allegro," by Rode from the Symphony in D. By Weber:—"Adagio;" (op. 60.) By Rode—"Air," with Variations. By Hatton:—"Air," with Variations.

MARCHES.

The Wedding March—Mendelssohn; Marche du Sacre, (Le Prophète)—Meyerbeer; War March—Mendelssohn; March Triomphale—W. T. Best; Marcia Caractéristique—Kalliwoda; Grand March,

(Egmont).—Beethoven; Marche des Bardes—Herz; Grand March, (Jessonda).—Spohr.

FANTASIAS.

Fantasia on old English airs; Military fantasia, (commemorative of the 5th November); Fantasia upon Scotch airs; Fantasia upon English national melodies.

DRAMATIC MUSIC.

"Reminiscences" of the following operas:—(These reminiscences appear to have afforded great satisfaction; the most striking and popular subjects in each opera are brought together, forming a "fantasia" of more than the ordinary length.) Operas by Meyerbeer:—"L'Etoile du Nord," "Les Huguenots," "Robert le Diable." By Mozart:—"Die Zauberflöte," "Le Nozze di Figaro," "Don Giovanni." By Bellini:—"La Sonnambula," "I Puritani," "Norma." By Donizetti:—"Lucrezia Borgia," "La Favorita," "Lucia di Lammermoor." By Verdi:—"Ernani," "Il Trovatore." By Auber:—"Masaniello." By Weber:—"Der Freyschütz," "Oberon," "Euryanthe." By Wallace:—"Maritani." By Balfe:—"The Bohemian Girl." By Rossini:—"Guglielmo Tell."

MISCELLANEOUS CONCERTED MUSIC.

By Sir Henry Bishop:—"Quintett, 'Now by day's retiring lamp,' Chorus, 'The Tiger crouches,' Trio and Chorus, 'The Chough and Crow,' Serenade, 'Sleep, gentle lady,' Quartett, 'Breathe my harp,' Chorus, 'The halt of the caravan,' Chorus, 'Allegiance we swear,' Quintett, 'Blow, gentle gales,' By Barnett:—"Trio, 'This magic wove scarf,' By Bellini:—"Quartett, 'A te o cara.' By Balfe:—"Quartett, 'Lo, the early beam of morning,' By Meyerbeer:—"Chant of Vivandières." By Mercadante:—"Dolce conforto." By Rossini:—"Dance sejour," Duet, 'Mira la bianca luna.' By Weber:—"Duet, 'Come, be gay.' By Mozart:—"Duet, 'Ah perdona.' By Haydn:—"Chorus, 'Come, gentle spring.' By Spohr:—"Duet, 'Dearest, let thy footsteps glide."

MISCELLANEOUS SONGS.

By Molique:—"Could I thro' ether fly," "When the moon is brightly shining." By Donizetti:—"Angiol d'amore," "Cupa fatal mestizia." By Mozart:—"Voi che sapete," "Qui sdegno." By Rossini:—"Di piacer." By Weber:—"The Mermaid's Song." By Haydn:—"A wealthy Lord" (Seasons).

OVERTURES.

By Weber:—"Jubilee," "Preciosa," "Oberon," "Euryanthe," "Der Freyschütz," "Peter Schmoll." By Mozart:—"Giovanni," "Der Zauberflöte." By Rossini:—"Cenerentola," "Siege of Corinth," "Il Barbiere di Siviglia," "La Gazza Ladra," "Tancredi," "L'Inganno Felice," "Guglielmo Tell," "L'Italiana in Algeri." By Auber:—"Masaniello," "Le Duc d'Orlone," "Zanetta," "Fra Diavolo," "Le Cheval de Bronze," "Le Domino Noir." By Beethoven:—"Coriolanus," "Fidelio." By Spohr:—"Jessonda," Overture Op. 15, "Die Setzen Dinge." By Meyerbeer:—"L'Etoile du Nord." By Donizetti:—"Belisario." By E. J. Loder:—"Macbeth." By Handel:—"Athaliah," "Saul," "Esther," "Samson." By Mehul:—"Stratonice." By Mendelssohn:—"Die Hochzeit des Camacho," "Midsummer Night's Dream," "Son and Stranger," Military Overture, Op. 24. By Reissiger:—"Yelva." By Hérold:—"Zampa." By Verdi:—"Luise Miller." By C. Lowe:—"Gutenberg." By J. L. Hatton:—"Henry the Eighth." By W. V. Wallace:—"Maritana." By Ambroise Thomas:—"Le Caïd."

These facts prove that it is quite possible for the highest class of music, judiciously collected, and varied with pieces of a lighter description, to please large audiences; and we think that great praise is due to Mr. Best, not only for his well-known executive talent on the organ, but for the taste and skill he has displayed in catering for the varied musical tastes and pleasures of the "masses." The universal appreciation he has met with reflects credit both upon his own talents and the judgment of the corporation, in selecting him to preside over the magnificent instrument in St. George's Hall. The second series of the organ concerts, which will, we trust, be as successful as the first, commence this (Saturday afternoon).

LIVERPOOL PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY.—Madlle. Piccolomini made her *début* in Liverpool on Tuesday night, before one of the most numerous and fashionable audiences of the season, anxious to behold the great vocal "star" of the day. On her first appearance, to sing the gem of *La Traviata*, "Ah forsé è lui," her piquant and prepossessing appearance excited a burst of applause; but, though an attempt was made to encore the

air, we think the expectations of the audience, who evidently expected something wonderful, were not quite satisfied. The duet with Herr Reichardt, also from the *Traviata*, "Parigi o cara," excited greater enthusiasm; but here again the fair vocalist refused the encore, having four other pieces to sing before the concert terminated. The next piece in which she took part was the brindisi from the *Traviata*, "Libiamo," which concluded the first part. In the second part, her only solo was the air "Convien partir," from the *Figlia del Reggimento*, in which Maria takes a farewell of the regiment. This aria was sung with so much pathos and with such a graceful and artless abandon, that the audience, at last roused into genuine and hearty enthusiasm, insisted so earnestly upon hearing it again, that the singer was obliged to comply. As a display of her versatility, she also sang the duet "Pronta io son," from *Don Pasquale*, with Belletti—both artists acting as well as singing with a degree of humour and vivacity which excited hearty laughter. This was also encored *aux grands cris*. The last piece in which Madlle. Piccolomini took part, was the quartette "E rimasto," from *Don Pasquale*, but neither the music, nor the execution of it, excited any particular sensation. On the whole Madlle. Piccolomini made a decided "hit," and we have no doubt but that the concert on Tuesday next, at which she will appear, will be as well attended as the one under notice. As a stranger we must next allude to Signor Beneventano, an artist from Her Majesty's Theatre, who also appeared in Liverpool for the first time at this concert. We did not much admire his version of "Il balen," from the *Trovatore*, which sounds best when sung in the simplest manner. In a duet with Belletti, from *Chiara di Rosenberg*, Signor Beneventano displayed considerable humour, and the full resources of a most powerful and telling *basso profondo*. The tenor of the party was the popular German artist, Herr Reichardt. His voice has much improved in sweetness and flexibility, and though he was not in his best voice on the present occasion, he was warmly received, and the tasteful and effective character of his *sotto voce* singing was especially noticeable. Signor Belletti always sings so well that it is difficult to find anything fresh to say respecting him, but we can safely state that no one could wish a more perfect display of pure Italian vocalism than his rendering of "Bella siccome," from *Don Pasquale*, while his *brío* and humour were of immense service in the converted pieces. The chorus sang with more than their usual care in Beethoven's *Praise of Music*, and Mendelssohn's fourth part song, "In the forest." The band, though somewhat too loud in the accompaniments, played Mehul's overture, *La Chasse*, in first-rate style, and rendered fair justice to Mendelssohn's *Melusine*, and Auber's *Lac des Fées*.

THE NEW CONCERT-ROOM OF ST GEORGE'S HALL—INAUGURATION CONCERT.

(From the Liverpool Mail.)

THE elegant new concert-room, at one end of St. George's Hall, the opening of which was originally announced earlier in the summer, took place last evening under the auspices of Messrs. Cramer, Beale, and Co., of London. Previous to noticing the inauguration concert, the following description of the new Hall will be read with interest:—

PASS we now to the concert-room, at the north end of the building, through an entrance hall of the purest Greek character, bearing evidence of the peculiarly refined nature of Elmes's mind. The walls are painted porphyry and granite, the beams and ceilings very pale stone, effectively enriched with pencilled ornaments, in a dark shade. While here we cannot help wishing that the plastered walls of corridors and staircases were finished in a similar way, rather than as wainscot on plaster. Casts from the Panathenaic frieze, from the Parthenon at Athens, are let into the walls round a portion of the Hall. The civilised New Zealander will, in times to come, see from this sculpture a Greek religious procession of four-and-a-half centuries before the Christian Era; but he will search in vain for a sculptured monument to illustrate aught of the English of 2,300 years later.

Two spacious staircases conduct to the concert-room, on entering which the spectator is struck with the pleasing form into which it is cast. Having just passed through the simple and severe Doric entrance, the exceeding beauty of this music theatre is additionally apparent. It

is excellent it is difficult to extract points for special commendation. A few of these, however, ought not to be passed over. The reeds, for example, are superb. The harmonic flutes, also, have surprising force, brilliance, and liquidity of tone. It has been found impossible to carry the 8-foot harmonic flute, with any effect, lower than fiddle G; from this note downwards, in the present instance, the scale is completed by open wood pipes; and it is worth remarking with what skill the voicer has concealed the break between the fundamental and harmonic series of sounds—so much so, indeed, that the whole scale may be played over without the change being manifest, unless to a very practised ear. The difficulty here overcome can only be properly estimated by those conversant with the peculiarities of this kind of register. The mixtures, too, have extraordinary breadth and sonorous brilliancy. They are somewhat peculiar from the effective nature of their *breaks*, and—in deference to the supposed antagonism of equal temperament to perfect thirds in the compound stops—from a total absence of tierce ranks from their composition.

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CHORUSES BY HANDEL:—“From the censor,” “Let their celestial concerts,” “May no rash intruder,” “Oh, the pleasure of the plains,” “Hallelujah,” “For unto us,” “The king shall rejoice,” “But as for his people,” “He gave them hailstones,” “How excellent,” “Sing unto god,” “Behold the Lamb of God,” “The Coronation Anthem,” “Your harps and cymbals sound.”

SACRED MUSIC BY MOZART:—Motet, “Splendete te Deus,” Quartet, “Recordare,” Air, “Agnus Dei,” and Chorus, “Dono nobis,” Chorus, “Gloria in excelsis,” Quartet, “Benedictus,” and Chorus, “Hosanna.” (Requiem.)

SACRED MUSIC:—By Haydn—Air, “On mighty wings,” Chorus, “The heavens are telling,” Quartet, “Ex incarnatus,” Air, “With verdure clad,” By Rossini—Trio, “Tantum ergo,” Chorus, “La carita,” Prayer, “Dal tuo stellato,” Air, “Cujus animam,” Chorus, “Ex inflammatus,” Air, “Pro peccatis,” Quartet, “Quando corpus,” Air, “Fac ut portem,” Quartet, “Sancta mater” (*Stabat Mater*). By Beethoven—Chorus, “Hallelujah” (*Mount of Olives*). By Lindpaintner—Chorus, “Hosanna, Son of David.” By Mendelssohn—Air, “If with all your hearts,” Chorus, “Be not afraid,” Air, “Oh, rest in the Lord,” Air, “Hear ye, Israel” (*Elijah*). By Winter—Trio, “O Jesu, O pastor bonus.”

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC.

By Beethoven:—The “Andantes” from the 1st, 2nd, and 7th Symphonies; the “Adagio” from the Sonata, op. 2; “Andante with Variations,” from the Septuor. By Mendelssohn:—“Adagio,” from the 3rd Symphony; “Andante,” from the Trio in C minor. By Mozart:—“Andante,” from the 9th Symphony; “Adagio,” from the 5th Symphony; “Andante,” from the Quintett in C minor. By Bach:—“Gavotta,” from an Overture. By Händel:—“Air with Variations,” from the “Suites des pièces,” “The Harmonious Blacksmith,” By Fesca:—“Romanza,” (op. 56.) By Haydn:—“Allegretto,” from the Military Symphony; “Romanza,” from the Symphony, “La Reine de France,” “Andante,” from the 3rd Symphony; “Andante,” from the 1st Symphony; “Adagio” and “Allegro,” from the Symphony in D. By Weber:—“Adagio,” (op. 60.) By Rode:—“Air,” with Variations. By Hattton:—“Air,” with Variations.

MARCHES.

The Wedding March—Mendelssohn; Marche du Sacre, (Le Prophète)—Meyerbeer; War March—Mendelssohn; March Triomphale—W. T. Best; Marcia Caractéristique—Kalliwoda; Grand March,

(Egmont.)—Beethoven; Marche des Bardes—Herz; Grand March, (Jessonda.)—Spohr.

FANTASIAS.

Fantasia on old English airs; Military fantasia, (commemorative of the 5th November); Fantasia upon Scotch airs; Fantasia upon English national melodies.

DRAMATIC MUSIC.

"Reminiscences" of the following operas:—(These reminiscences appear to have afforded great satisfaction; the most striking and popular subjects in each opera are brought together, forming a "fantasia" of more than the ordinary length.) Operas by Meyerbeer:—"L'Etoile du Nord," "Les Huguenots," "Robert le Diable." By Mozart:—"Die Zauberflöte," "Le Nozze di Figaro," "Don Giovanni." By Bellini:—"La Sonnambula," "I Puritani," "Norma." By Donizetti:—"Lucrezia Borgia," "La Favorita," "Lucia di Lammermoor." By Verdi:—"Ernani," "Il Trovatore." By Auber:—"Masaniello." By Weber:—"Der Freyschütz," "Oberon," "Euryanthe." By Wallace:—"Maritani." By Balfe:—"The Bohemian Girl." By Rossini:—"Guglielmo Tell."

MISCELLANEOUS CONCERTED MUSIC.

By Sir Henry Bishop:—Quintett, "Now by day's retiring lamp;" Chorus, "The Tiger crouches;" Trio and Chorus, "The Chough and Crow;" Serenade, "Sleep, gentle lady;" Quartett, "Breathe my harp;" Chorus, "The halt of the caravan;" Chorus, "Allegiance we swear;" Quintett, "Blow, gentle gales." By Barnett:—Trio, "This magic wove scarf." By Bellini:—Quartett, "A te o cara." By Balfe:—Quartett, "Lo, the early beam of morning." By Meyerbeer:—"Chant of Vivandières." By Mercadante:—"Dolce conforto." By Rossini:—"Duns ce séjour;" Duet, "Mira la bianca luna." By Weber:—Duet, "Come, be gay." By Mozart:—Duet, "Ah perdona." By Haydn:—Chorus, "Come, gentle spring." By Spohr:—Duet, "Dearest, let thy footsteps glide."

MISCELLANEOUS SONGS.

By Molique:—"Could I thro' ether fly;" "When the moon is brightly shining." By Donizetti:—"Angiol d'amore;" "Cupa fatal mestizia." By Mozart:—"Voi che sapete;" "Qui s'addio." By Rossini:—"Di piacer." By Weber:—"The Mermaid's Song." By Haydn:—"A wealthy Lord" (Seasons).

OVERTURES.

By Weber:—"Jubilee," "Preciosa," "Oberon," "Euryanthe," "Der Freyschütz," "Peter Schmöll." By Mozart:—"Giovanni," "Der Zauberflöte." By Rossini:—"Cenerentola," "Siege of Corinth," "Il Barbiere di Siviglia," "La Gazza Ladra," "Tancredi," "L'Inganno Felice," "Guglielmo Tell," "L'Italiana in Algeri." By Auber:—"Masaniello," "Le Duc d'Orléans," "Zanetta," "Fra Diavolo," "Le Cheval de Bronze," "Le Domino Noir." By Beethoven:—"Coriolanus," "Fidelio." By Spohr:—"Jessonda," "Overture Op. 15," "Die Setzen Dinge." By Meyerbeer:—"L'Etoile du Nord." By Donizetti:—"Belisario." By E. J. Loder:—"Macbeth." By Händel:—"Athaliah," "Saul," "Esther," "Samson." By Mehul:—"Stratonice." By Mendelssohn:—"Die Hochzeit des Camacho," "Midsummer Night's Dream," "Son and Stranger." Military Overture, Op. 24. By Reissiger:—"Yelva." By Hérold:—"Zampa." By Verdi:—"Luisa Miller." By C. Lowe:—"Gutenberg." By J. L. Hatton:—"Henry the Eighth." By W. V. Wallace:—"Maritana." By Ambrose Thomas:—"Le Caid."

These facts prove that it is quite possible for the highest class of music, judiciously collected, and varied with pieces of a lighter description, to please large audiences; and we think that great praise is due to Mr. Best, not only for his well-known executive talent on the organ, but for the taste and skill he has displayed in catering for the varied musical tastes and pleasures of the "masses." The universal appreciation he has met with reflects credit both upon his own talents and the judgment of the corporation, in selecting him to preside over the magnificent instrument in St. George's Hall. The second series of the organ concerts, which will, we trust, be as successful as the first, commence this (Saturday afternoon).

LIVERPOOL PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY.—Madlle. Piccolomini made her *debut* in Liverpool on Tuesday night, before one of the most numerous and fashionable audiences of the season, anxious to behold the great vocal "star" of the day. On her first appearance, to sing the gem of *La Traviata*, "Ah forsé è lui," her piquant and prepossessing appearance excited a burst of applause; but, though an attempt was made to encore the

air, we think the expectations of the audience, who evidently expected something wonderful, were not quite satisfied. The duet with Herr Reichardt, also from the *Traviata*, "Parigi o cara," excited greater enthusiasm; but here again the fair vocalist refused the encore, having four other pieces to sing before the concert terminated. The next piece in which she took part was the brindisi from the *Traviata*, "Libiamo," which concluded the first part. In the second part, her only solo was the air "Convien partir," from the *Figlia del Reggimento*, in which Maria takes a farewell of the regiment. This aria was sung with so much pathos and with such a graceful and artless abandon, that the audience, at last roused into genuine and hearty enthusiasm, insisted so earnestly upon hearing it again, that the singer was obliged to comply. As a display of her versatility, she also sang the duet "Pronta io son," from *Don Pasquale*, with Belletti—both artists acting as well as singing with a degree of humour and vivacity which excited hearty laughter. This was also encored *aux grands cris*. The last piece in which Madlle. Piccolomini took part, was the quartette "E rimasto," from *Don Pasquale*, but neither the music, nor the execution of it, excited any particular sensation. On the whole Madlle. Piccolomini made a decided "hit," and we have no doubt but that the concert on Tuesday next, at which she will appear, will be as well attended as the one under notice. As a stranger we must next allude to Signor Beneventano, an artist from Her Majesty's Theatre, who also appeared in Liverpool for the first time at this concert. We did not much admire his version of "Il balen," from the *Trovatore*, which sounds best when sung in the simplest manner. In a duet with Belletti, from *Chiara di Rosenberg*, Signor Beneventano displayed considerable humour, and the full resources of a most powerful and telling *basso profondo*. The tenor of the party was the popular German artist, Herr Reichardt. His voice has much improved in sweetness and flexibility, and though he was not in his best voice on the present occasion, he was warmly received, and the tasteful and effective character of his *sotto voce* singing was especially noticeable. Signor Belletti always sings so well that it is difficult to find anything fresh to say respecting him, but we can safely state that no one could wish a more perfect display of pure Italian vocalism than his rendering of "Bella siccome," from *Don Pasquale*, while his *brío* and humour were of immense service in the converted pieces. The chorus sang with more than their usual care in Beethoven's *Praise of Music*, and Mendelssohn's fourth part song, "In the forest." The band, though somewhat too loud in the accompaniments, played Méhul's overture, *La Chasse*, in first-rate style, and rendered fair justice to Mendelssohn's *Melusine*, and Auber's *Lac des Fées*.

THE NEW CONCERT-ROOM OF ST GEORGE'S HALL—INAUGURATION CONCERT.

(From the Liverpool Mail.)

THE elegant new concert-room, at one end of St. George's Hall, the opening of which was originally announced earlier in the summer, took place last evening under the auspices of Messrs. Cramer, Beale, and Co., of London. Previous to noticing the inauguration concert, the following description of the new Hall will be read with interest:—

Pass we now to the concert-room, at the north end of the building, through an entrance hall of the purest Greek character, bearing evidence of the peculiarly refined nature of Elmes's mind. The walls are painted porphyry and granite, the beams and ceilings very pale stone, effectively enriched with pencilled ornaments, in a dark shade. While here we cannot help wishing that the plastered walls of corridors and staircases were finished in a similar way, rather than as wainscot on plaster. Casts from the Panathenaic frieze, from the Parthenon at Athens, are let into the walls round a portion of the Hall. The civilised New Zealander will, in times to come, see from this sculpture a Greek religious procession of four-and-a-half centuries before the Christian Era; but he will search in vain for a sculptured monument to illustrate aught of the English of 2,300 years later.

Two spacious staircases conduct to the concert-room, on entering which the spectator is struck with the pleasing form into which it is cast. Having just passed through the simple and severe Doric entrance, the exceeding beauty of this music theatre is additionally apparent. It

is found that the circular or horsehoe form in plan is the best adapted for efficient hearing and sight. In this instance the plan is an oval, of 72 by 77 feet, while a recess behind the stage, of 30 by 12 feet, adds much in the points of effect and convenience. Connecting this recess with the room is a spacious arch, 25 feet in width, and 37 feet high. An ample stage fills this space, and projects into the room; it is capable of accommodating an orchestra of sixty performers, and a semi-chorus of seventy.

The seats for the audience are arranged to hold about eleven hundred; they are now being fixed, and are to be fixed in a complete and comfortable manner.

A gallery runs round the room, omitted, of course, at the stage; the design is remarkable and pleasing, its face being a series of projections or bows, on plan, forming a wavy outline, continually varying in perspective appearance. Pilasters, or pedestals, with a sculptured figure or caryatids, on the front face of each, acts as supports and ornaments to the gallery.

We confess we should have approved more highly of these figures had they been more architectural looking, and less like French garden-nymphs. They have the fault of the modern Gallic School of Sculpture, in being mere transcripts of nature; not idealised, not the embodiment of the beauty dwelling in the artist's own mind, the enstomement of the higher excellences of humanity; they are of the earth, earthy.

Having sketched the main features of the arrangement of this beautiful theatre, we will observe the more special forms; and we notice that the walls are divided, by broad pilasters of wood, into fifteen bays or compartments; the pilasters run from the floor, through the gallery, up to the cornice, which breaks round it and forms a very handsome crowning cap, supported by consoles in pairs, having festoons of bay leaves from one to the other. Between them is a bust of Apollo, and a sculptured lyre, in each alternate capital. The wall space between the pilasters is panelled in wood, fixed free of the wall, the whole of the wall surface acting thus as a sounding-board to the speaker or singer on the stage. This is so great an aid in producing acoustic perfection, that in some theatres everything is of wood, even the ceiling; the place in fact being as a violin. Continuing round the room, and underneath the main cornice, is a handsome frieze—a manifest ornament to the room; in each wall compartment, griffins, eagle-winged, guard a circular shield, on which are inscribed, in raised letters, gilt, the names of the following musical composers; one name to each shield:—

Handel,	Palestrina,	Spohr,
Haydn,	Corelli,	Weber,
Mozart,	Purcell,	Wibly,
Beethoven,	Bach,	Arne,
Mendelssohn,	Gluck,	Bishop.
Meyerbeer,	Rossini,	

The space not taken up by the shields and supporters is filled with elaborate scroll and foliage work, modelled with much delicacy; the back ground of the frieze is gilded. We omitted to mention that the panels in the wall pilasters are filled in with papier maché scrolls.

In the recess at the back of the proscenium are eight fluted Corinthian columns, twenty-one feet in height, highly wrought and further decorated with gold. Between each column is an immense plate of silvered glass, repeating in the most agreeable manner the ceilings and part of the walls. As far as we are aware, this is the first instance in this country of mirrors being introduced into strictly architectural interiors, though the French have long used this mode of imparting apparent increased size to their rooms and halls. The arched ceiling over this recess is perforated for ground glass panels, which, with a window of elliptic form, in the wall underneath, gives ample light during the day. We now come to the principal ceiling. A cove of bold outline springs from the cornice which runs round the room; this is most elaborately panelled in circular and diamond shaped compartments, fully moulded and carved, and filled in with open traceried scroll-work for ventilation. Above this cove, is a highly decorated band, containing the "guillochi" and other ornaments; and from this, at thirty-seven feet from the floor, stretches the flat ceiling, with open latticed panels radiating. In the centre of this flat ceiling is an oval opening for light, about 14 feet by 11½ feet, surrounded by a massive band of sculptured fruit and flowers, and further ornamented with oak leaves, etc., with mouldings and minor ornaments. A description of this beautiful and highly-wrought room would be incomplete were notice not taken of the coloured decorations. We think we shall be safe in saying, that, seeing no noticeable colours, but only buff and blue, are used, few, if any, are more satisfactory in this particular; the good taste evidenced is alike satisfactory to the observer and creditable to the directors.

The panelling of the cove and flat ceiling has two margins; the principal one is tinted buff, the secondary one blue; the mouldings

and all the carved work are of cream colour, edged with gold; certain minor mouldings are gilt on their surface. The cornice is of cream colour, with some small mouldings gilt; the "dentils" and the sculptured frieze have a back-ground of gold. The wall panelling of wood is painted in imitation of rich and delicate woods, the general tone being carefully considered, so as to harmonise with, and yet be distinct from, the ceiling. The back-ground of scrolls in the panel of the wood pilasters is of gold, and the same rich metal is, though sparingly, repeated in the mouldings of the wall panelling.

The lattice work in front of the gallery is painted cream colour, and the carved portions are gilt. The red line of the cushion top, and the small gold ornament, with red ground at the bottom of the gallery front, brighten up the fore-ground of the picture, and, though small in quantity of colour, give value to the quieter portions.

The hall is principally lighted by a magnificent crystal chandelier, manufactured and designed by Messrs. Osler, of London and Birmingham, the manufacturers of the celebrated crystal fountain, one of the chief attractions of the Great Exhibition of 1851, and now one of the most exquisite of the thousand "art treasures" in the Crystal Palace at Sydenham. Its appearance is singularly brilliant and attractive, and it is certainly worth the £400 paid for it by the corporation. Smaller temporary lights are also placed over the stage and some of the boxes, but at present no definite arrangement has been made relative to the additional means of lighting the hall.

NEW MUSIC HALL, BIRMINGHAM.

Birmingham, Sept. 3.

YESTERDAY a new Music Hall was inaugurated in this town with a performance of Händel's *Messiah*, which is to be followed, this evening and to-morrow, by concerts of sacred and secular music of sufficient interest and variety to guarantee the title of "inaugurative festival" assumed by the projectors.

The execution of *The Messiah* to-day, which was attended by a very numerous audience, tested the acoustic qualities of the hall in a highly advantageous manner. The orchestra, numbering between fifty and sixty, was composed of the members of Mr. Alfred Mellon's Orchestral Union, reinforced by sundry local professors. The chorus (by no means so efficient as the orchestra), considerably more than 100 in number, was chiefly local. The principal singers, like the orchestra and chorus, were all English:—Madame Clara Novello, Miss Dolby, Mr. and Mrs. Weiss, Messrs. Thomas, Montem Smith, and Sims Reeves. So far as these ladies and gentlemen (whose performance in *The Messiah* needs no description) were concerned, there was little or nothing to criticise. The familiar recitatives and airs in Händel's sublime inspiration were delivered with the excellence to which we have long been accustomed, and there was nothing new to remark. The orchestra, too, was admirable throughout. The choruses left much to desire, although some of the best known among them were given with great effect, and the oratorio was heartily enjoyed by the audience. Previous to *The Messiah* the National Anthem (Mr. Costa's arrangement) was sung, Madame Novello, Miss Dolby, and Mr. Sims Reeves taking the solos. Mr. Simms, of Birmingham, presided at the organ, and Mr. Alfred Mellon directed the whole performance with distinguished ability.

Birmingham, Sept. 4th.

The first miscellaneous concert, yesterday evening, drew a larger audience to the new hall than was assembled in the morning. The programme of the first concert contained some good things, but was not exactly what might have been expected to celebrate an event of such interest. The orchestral performances were really first-rate; and perhaps on no previous occasion has the first symphony of Beethoven been performed with more admirable precision and delicacy under Mr. Alfred Mellon's direction. The overtures to *Guillaume Tell* and *Fra Diavolo* were equally effective; and the former being vociferously encored, the last movement was repeated. What was said yesterday about the new organ was fully justified by the performance of Mr. Simms (organist of St. Phillip's Church); but the piece selected by that gentleman to display its capabilities—"Grand Fantasia, by Hermann Berens" (organist in Stockholm)—was neither grand nor fanciful, but simply dull—dreary and long as music in the abstract, and as organ music by no means well adapted for the instrument.

The only other instrumental performance was a solo on the flute, with orchestral accompaniments (*Marie Stuart*), composed and executed with wonderful cleverness by Mr. R. S. Fratten (member of the Orchestral Union), who was greatly applauded. The rest of the concert embraced a large variety of pieces, sung by Mdme. Clara Novello, Miss Dolby, Mr. Sims Reeves, Mr. and Mdme. Weiss. Among the rest were several ballads, not precisely of the best, although one of them—"The Captive of Agincourt," by Mr. Macfarren—was honourably distinguished from the others, both by the grace of its melody and the finish, combined with simplicity, of its accompaniments, and was so charmingly sung by Mdme. Novello that the audience redemanded it unanimously. A similar honour was conferred upon another ballad, which was wholly and solely attributable to the expressive manner in which it was given by Mr. Sims Reeves, since, as music, it was worthless. Mr. Weiss more wisely selected the fine air "La Vendetta," from Mozart's *Figaro*, which he sang most ably; and no one could blame "Madame" Weiss for selecting her husband's pretty song, "Let me be near thee," and singing it, as she did, very prettily. The quartets from *Rigoletto* and *Oberon*, both excellent specimens of their widely different schools, could hardly have been intrusted to more competent artists than Madame Novello, Miss Dolby, Mr. Sims Reeves, and Mr. Weiss. The duet between the heroine and her lover, from the Donizetti's *Linda di Chamouni*, by Madame Novello and Mr. Sims Reeves, obtained great favour and deserved it; but Bishop's fine glee, "Blow, gentle gales," could scarcely have gone worse. As Mr. Thomas, the bass, was put down in the programme for a tenor part in the glee (which is for five voices), it is due to this young and promising singer to state that he took no part in the performance, which was universally condemned. The artistic singing of Miss Dolby, in a *contralto* air from Donizetti's *Pia di Tolomei*, was more to be commended than her choice of the music, which is among the feeblest efforts of its composer.

Elijah was given to-day, and attracted about as full an audience as that of yesterday, but no fuller. If the reader can imagine a very fine performance of this great masterpiece, "sauf les chœurs," as our neighbours say, he will have some notion of the truth. Anything more perfect than the orchestral accompaniments we do not remember; nor could a better execution of the solo vocal parts, the singers being the same as in the *Messiah*, have been looked for under any circumstances. But Mr. Alfred Mellon was sadly trammelled by his chorus, and compelled to take the majority of the choruses slower than was intended by the composer, in order to avoid breaking down—which, even with this indispensable precaution, but for the intelligence and unswerving firmness of the conductor, would, in all probability, have more than once been the case. When the solo singers and the band alone were engaged the performance was literally faultless. One of the most difficult pieces in *Elijah* is the double quartet, "For He shall give His angels charge." This is rarely sung in so correct a way as entirely to satisfy the critical ear, but on the present occasion (when the five principal singers, who have been named, were assisted by Mrs. Bull, a local professor, Messrs. Montem Smith and Weiss) it was beyond reproach. Four pieces were encored and repeated in the second part—the air, "Hear ye, Israel," or rather the *allegro*, "Be not afraid" (by Madame Novello); the unaccompanied trio, "Lift thine eyes to the mountains" (Mad. Novello, Mad. Weiss, and Miss Dolby); "O rest in the Lord" (Miss Dolby); and "Then shall the righteous shine forth" (Mr. Sims Reeves), all of which were sung and accompanied in a style that set criticism at defiance. The second and last miscellaneous concert to-night will bring the "inauguration" to a close.

MUSIC IN LEICESTER.—(From our own correspondent).—The first of Mr. Nicholson's Grand Concerts for the season took place on Saturday evening, in the New Music Hall, when the Orchestral Union, accompanied by Picco and Miss Julia Bleaden, appeared for the first time in this town. The spacious rooms were well filled, and the concert gave unqualified satisfaction. An English opera company, including Miss Rebecca Isaacs, Miss F. Reeves, Messrs. Galer, Borrani, Summers, &c.,

are performing at the Theatre Royal for this and next week. Mr. Loder conducts the orchestra. The attendance has been tolerably good. Mr. Nicholson's second concert will take place on the 8th of October, when the admirable party organized by Mr. Boosey, consisting of Mad. Enderssohn, Miss Fanny Huddart, Miss Arabella Goddard, Sims Reeves, Balfe, and George Case, will perform.

PROPOSED MUSICAL FESTIVAL IN HONOUR OF MRS. SUNDERLAND.—At a numerous and influential meeting held at the George Hotel, Huddersfield, on Monday evening last (Jas. C. Fenton, Esq., in the chair), it was unanimously agreed, that, under existing circumstances, some mark of public respect should be shown to Mrs. Sunderland, and that the first manifestation of it should proceed from that town, with which her early career was most intimately connected; and for that purpose a morning performance of the *Messiah* and an evening miscellaneous concert should be given in the Philosophical Hall, on or about the 15th of October. A committee was formed, with Mr. James T. Wigney as honorary secretary, to carry out the necessary arrangements.

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HOLLOWAY'S OINTMENT AND PILLS ARE INFALLIBLE REMEDIES FOR ABSCESSSES.—Mr. Henry Rodwell, of Great Canterbury-place, Lambeth, had been tormented with a fearful abscess in the arm, so extensive and deeply seated that his medical attendants despaired of his ultimate recovery. He had been dismissed as incurable from three hospitals, when he was recommended to make use of Holloway's Ointment and Pills, which he did, and with such signal success, that in one month the abscess commenced healing, its virulence abated, and shortly afterwards it was completely cured. Sold by all Medicine Vendors throughout the world; at Professor Holloway's Establishments, 244, Strand, London; and 80, Maiden-lane, New York; by A. Stampa, Constantinople; A. Guidicy, Smyrna; and E. Muir, Malta.

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HENRY SMART.

PREFACE.

"Although but to-day offered to the public, this little work is, in fact, more than eight years old. At the commencement of the year 1848, the congregation of St. Luke's Church, desirous of some better performance of the musical portion of the service than is ordinarily found in the parish churches of London, instructed me to take the necessary steps towards the formation of a choir. A very early question for my decision was as to the amount and kind of music to be sung under this state of things. It seemed to me that, although the service might be, to a great extent, what is termed 'choral,' it should not, on that account, cease to be congregational. We might, for instance, advantageously adopt much of the cathedral usage,—such as singing the responsive parts of the service, and chanting the Canticles and Psalms of the day—in which the congregation would speedily learn to take part, and we might even have an Anthem in the place allotted to it in the Prayer Book; but we must, notwithstanding, retain the *Metrical Psalmody*. If we would not both destroy a characteristic feature of the Parochial Service, and deny to the people a kind of music which, according to my experience, and in spite of some modern notions on the subject, they certainly sing, when favourably circumstanced, with more zeal and effect than any other kind of music, I should have been obliged to retain *Metrical Psalmody*, my great difficulty was in selecting an arrangement of tunes for the use of my choir. I may have been fanciful or hypercritical, but I must confess that, after making an extensive acquaintance with books of the sort, I found none entirely to suit my purpose. Most, doubtless, had merits to recommend them for their peculiar objects; but it was not in accordance with the views I have always held on the matter, to adopt either the pretty glee-like harmonization of some, or the Gothic severity of 'note against note'—both tiresome to the singer and not necessarily of devotional character—found in others. I therefore, as many have done before, determined to arrange a Tune-Book for myself, and hoped—as, doubtless, did my predecessors—to advance Parochial Psalmody one step, at least, in the right direction.

"The same reasons which induced me to undertake the work—added to the kind solicitations of many friends—amateur and professional—have now led to its publication. The style of the vocal arrangement answered my expectation. The choir sang their parts with spirit and satisfaction, while the congregation speedily ceased to find any difficulty in bearing their share in the general harmony; and, I trust and believe, that similar results will follow wherever it is adopted.

"Having thus given the history of this little book, it is necessary to say something as to its contents. The object has been, not to accumulate the greatest possible number, but to present a fair selection of ordinary and useful tunes, put into the best shape I could devise for choral and congregational purposes. Many of the melodies have been, probably, much corrupted by long use. The extent to which they are impure, however, would be now very difficult to ascertain; and I have, therefore, taken the least objectionable versions I could procure, that were, at the same time, at all reconcilable with the prevailing traditional habit of singing them. There are, also, several melodies in this collection of which I by no means approve; but since, in spite of their demerits, it seems probable that they will always continue in congregational use, I thought it best to admit them—clothed, however, in such a style of harmony as might, in some degree, compensate for their original meanness or triviality of character. The number of absolutely new tunes is very small, being limited to two, composed by a former pupil of mine, Mr. Aspinwall, of Bolton (and which, for their musical merit, and the scarcity of good tunes in their peculiar metres, are well worthy a place in any collection), and two or three contributions of my own composed to metres at present very scantily provided with appropriate melodies. The tunes marked as *German Melodies* are taken—with certain slight, though necessary, alterations—from the *71 Viertunmige Choralgesänge* of Sebastian Bach.

"Several of the tunes are harmonized in two different ways. Their use, at the organist's discretion, will be found of service in the progress of a long psalm, not only as affording relief to the ear, but as a means of following, in some degree, such variety of sentiments as may exist in the words. A few of the melodies appear in a third shape—namely, sung in unison and octave by the choir, and supported by an independent organ-part; and from this mode of treatment, judiciously applied, the *choral* will be found to yield some of the finest effects of which it is capable. It would have been impossible to have given this triple form to every tune (even if all were properly susceptible of it) without unduly swelling the bulk of the volume. The examples given are, therefore, rather offered as practical hints to organists who may feel disposed to carry out the suggestion. With the same view I have inserted, at the end of the book, an example of four methods of 'giving out' a psalm-tune;—the object in all being to keep the melody palpably distinct under whatever form of accompaniment.

"The organ-part, throughout, it will be seen, is not simply a compression of the vocal score. It will serve as a guide to the less experienced class of organists as to what additional notes can be advantageously introduced in accompaniment without damage to the progress of the vocal harmony. No further explanation is necessary as to this organ-part, except that the *pedals* are to be employed throughout, either as an independent part (as happens in a few places) or in doubling the lowest notes of the base staff.

"It would certainly never have occurred to me to undertake the defence of anything in such very general use as *Metrical Psalmody*, but for the violent attacks latterly made on it in many clerical quarters, and with, I fear, no very honest intention. A contemporaneous publication, for instance, rejoicing in all the medieval barbarism of the four-line staff and diamond note, makes its appearance on the assumption (contained in its advertisements) that *Metrical Psalmody* 'is found no longer to satisfy either the spiritual wants or musical tastes of Christians.' What may be the 'spiritual wants of the Christians here alluded to, it is needless to enquire; but there can be no difficulty in deciding that 'musical taste' must be indeed at the lowest ebb in any who can really prefer the meaningless and uncouth 'plain song of the church' to any other combination of sound whatever. Few who have listened to a 'choral' in the Lutheran churches of the Continent will have failed to notice the zeal and earnestness with which it is sung, or the grand

and solemn effect it produces; and although the music used in the Dissenting chapels of this country is too commonly of a trivial and even vulgar description, it is invariably sung with sufficient of energy and good-will to show both the hold *Metrical Psalmody* has on the affections of people habituated to sing, and the large musical effect it would yield under the corrective discipline of good taste.

"English Psalmody has, undoubtedly, many faults, but I hold it to be the far wiser course to endeavour to correct these by narrowing the selection of tunes and imparting a more vigorous tone to their harmonization, than to attempt to supplant it by a style of music utterly barbarous in itself, antagonistic to the grammatical structure of our language, and so wholly opposed to the feeling of the people that it can never come into general use, except on the incredible supposition of a second universal ascendancy of the church which invented it.

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Printed by WILLIAM SPENCER JOHNSON, "Nassau Steam Press," 60, St. Martin's lane, in the Parish of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, in the County of Middlesex.—Saturday, September 6, 1856.